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SUBJECT: TALKING POINTS FOR UNSC CONSULTATIONS ON KUWAITI PROPERTY AND MISSING PERSONS, DECEMBER 10

1.(U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 2.

2.(U) USUN is instructed to draw from the following talking points during the December 10 consultations on the Secretary-General's December 4 report on the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals or their remains and the return of all Kuwaiti property, including archives, seized by the former regime in Iraq.

3.(U) Begin points:

-- I would like to begin today by thanking Ambassador Tarasov for his work regarding the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals or their remains and the return of all Kuwaiti property, including archives, seized by the former Iraqi regime. I am heartened by both his diligence and his compassion and I remain confident in his ability to facilitate the resolution of the difficult and outstanding issues that remain with us today.

-- Today, I would like to discuss four points on the developments and progress achieved during the reporting period.

-- First, allow me to commend the Iraqi government for welcoming Ambassador Tarasov in his capacity as High-Level Coordinator, the first visit by a Coordinator since the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime. I also wish to commend both the Iraqi and Kuwaiti governments for their cooperation in resolving the fate of missing persons and the work of identifying human remains. We extend our condolences to the families of all those who are still missing and those who have been identified. In light of the markedly improved security situation in Iraq, I am hopeful that search and assessment operations will increase in the future, as will the pace of exhumation activities at sites identified as containing the remains of Kuwaiti POW's. Visits to burial sites in Iraq are of paramount importance, as is the cooperation of witnesses and local residents. I suggest that every effort be made to reach out to these individuals; their cooperation will be critical to achieving a successful conclusion.

-- Second, I wish to note the helpful offer of technical and capacity building assistance that has been offered by UNAMI in regard to exhumation activities. We look forward to seeing this project come to fruition.

-- Third, I regret that the case of our own missing Navy pilot, Captain Michael S. Speicher, has not been resolved. The United States continues to investigate the loss of Captain Speicher, who has been missing from action in Iraq since January 17, 1991. The government and people of the United States share a common bond and a lasting commitment with other nations and families seeking answers to the fate of their missing personnel. Efforts to conclusively determine the circumstances or fate of Captain

Speicher have not yet been successful and the United States desires all efforts possible to be taken until he is recovered and returned to his family and loved ones. We look forward to the resolution of this case and are grateful for the cooperation of the Kuwaiti and Iraqi governments in this regard.

-- Finally, I am disappointed by the lack of progress made in the retrieval of Kuwaiti national archives and am particularly disappointed that, despite the Iraqi government's discovery and promise to return hundreds of Kuwaiti radio and television tape recordings, this has not yet occurred. I urge the governments of Iraq and Kuwait to coordinate the transfer expeditiously, utilizing the good offices of the Coordinator as necessary.

RICE